



British School of Geneva

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Revised – November 2020

To be reviewed – July 2021

Agreed by SLT

1. Aim

The aim of the British School of Geneva attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all students. Regular attendance at school is key to steady student progress and enjoyment of learning.

The maintenance of excellent attendance, with all students attending school as they should be, is the joint responsibility of parents, students and staff members. The school will work with parents and students to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead to poor attendance are given the appropriate attention and support.

This policy is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusion.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

School Leadership Team.

The leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance, which includes forming positive relationships with parents and other carers.
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, to include regular reviews.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and are trained to recognise and deal appropriately with attendance issues.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance are in place and working effectively.
- Support families who are having difficulty getting their child to attend
- Document any specific individual interventions or steps taken in working with parents and students to improve attendance, in case of future action.

Teachers and Support Staff

The school's teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance.
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance policy, and that they will seek support from the leadership team if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue.
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily at homeroom and in each subject session.
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed.

Parents & Carers

We request that parents:

- Engage with their child's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing in school.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- Encourage and support their child's aspirations
- Follow the set procedure for reporting absences (**see Section 3**) and include an expected date for return.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Use the school as a support when their child is having difficulties, communicating early any problems or issues which may affect their child's attendance.
- Do not take their child(ren) out of school for holidays during term time. However, if parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so. (**See Section 3.5**)

Students

We request that pupils:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents and timetable.
- Speak to their Form Tutor or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact upon their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on Time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through the timetable.
- Remind their parents to notify the school to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the correct school procedure if they arrive late (**see Section 3.8**). Students are held responsible for this and Form Tutors are responsible for explaining the correct procedure. This is vital for Health & Safety in the event of a school evacuation.

3. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation is provided to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Unless otherwise advised, all absences should be recorded by Form Tutors as 'unauthorised' in the first instance.

Once an absence has been authorised, Form Tutors/Leadership/Admin should enter it as such and complete a remark in a comment box to show the reason for the absence.

Where staff have concerns regarding an absence they should immediately refer it to the admin team who will investigate accordingly.

The admin team will liaise with the appropriate member of the leadership team (Head of Section, Deputy Principal, or Principal) when needed.

Where a student is absent without prior permission, parents should inform the school at the earliest opportunity either by phone or email. However, written confirmation must also be submitted on the first day of absence and indicate an expected return date. When sending the email this should be addressed to:

Primary: Administration, Head of Primary and Class Teacher

Secondary: Administration, Head of Sections and Form Tutor

A Level: Administration, Head of Sixth form and Principal

3.1 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents must alert the school by email or phone call on the **first day** of absence. (see Section 3 above)

For an absence due to illness of more than three days, a medical note/certificate must be provided.

3.2 Medical or Dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, students should attend school for as much of the day as possible.

3.3 Authorised absences

There will be some incidences where the school will authorise an absence (e.g. bereavement).

3.4 Sickness

Students who feel unwell during the school day must report to the school office immediately. The Admin team will use the emergency contact details to contact parents to come and collect their children. Absences due to ill health will be treated as authorised. The Admin team will record these absences on the online register.

3.5 Suspension/Temporary exclusion

This is treated as an authorised absence.

3.6 Family holidays and extended leave

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may, however, request an exceptional leave of absence during term time.

Requests for leave of this type should be made by email to the Head of Section and/or the Principal at least **3 weeks in advance** of the leave being taken. In case of unforeseen circumstances, such as bereavement, this stipulation will be relaxed.

Retrospective applications will not be accepted and the time taken out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to by email and will outline details of when the student is expected back in school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there is any cause for a delay in this expected return date.

When deciding whether to authorise an absence, the Principal (or other appropriate member of the leadership team) will take into account the following:

- Previous attendance record
- Age of the student
- Purpose of the leave
- Ability of the student to keep up or catch up with work
- Student's work and homework record and attainment
- Frequency of similar requests
- Closeness to public examinations

If permission is denied, but the student is nonetheless absent, the absence will be classed as **unauthorised**. Parents should be advised that this will adversely affect their child's overall attendance history when it comes to the providing of references. For students in Years 10 and up, it may also impact on the 90% attendance target needed for entry into the public examinations.

3.7 Religious observance

BSG recognises that there may be times when students of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall during term time. Authorised absences will be allowed for these times.

However, as parents should be aware of these dates, advance notification by email is required.

3.8 Study Leave

During the time of the examinations, the school will allow students sitting IGCSE and A level examinations to leave to study at home. This will not be recorded as an absence but as 'Excused' (as for school trips).

However, students are welcome to come in and study in school if they wish, but should notify the main office of their presence for Health & Safety reasons in case of a school evacuation.

3.9 Registration & late arrival

Registration begins at 08.15 for Secondary and A Level classes and at 08.30 for Primary classes. Students who arrive after this time, but during the registration period will be marked as **late**. The registration period ends at 08.25 for Secondary and 08.45 for Primary.

Students who arrive after the registration period has ended should go straight to the school office to sign in (in the case of Primary students, the parent should go to the office) and give a reason for the late arrival. During covid restrictions, parents must notify the office of any lateness via email or telephone. It is vital for reasons of Health & Safety that students be signed in so that all students are accounted for.

A register is also taken by subject teachers at the start of each lesson, and unexplained absences will be referred. If a student is late to a lesson, this too will be recorded.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. It will also be a factor in any future references which the school may be asked to provide.

Primary section

- If a student in the primary section is late, the accompanying parent needs to come to the Reception and sign a register noting time of arrival and reason for lateness. During covid regulations, parents must notify the office of any lateness by email / phone.
- Students exhibiting repeated lateness will have sanctions imposed including detentions after school in order to catch up on missed work.

Key Stage 3 & 4

- The student will have to announce themselves at the Reception and sign the register explaining the reasons for lateness. Admin will record the reasons for lateness on the online register. Repeat offenders will have sanctions imposed including detentions after school in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Key Stage 5

- The student will have to announce themselves at the Reception in the sixth form centre and sign the register explaining the reasons for lateness.
- Repeat offenders will have sanctions imposed and parents will be involved. Meeting with

4. School Action : following up absences

Homeroom registers should be completed electronically during the homeroom period. A hard copy will be completed by the admin team (for use in case of a school evacuation) after 08:45.

Where there are unexplained absences the school will contact the parents/carers (Head of Primary; Head of Section for years 7-11; Head of Sixth Form for Years 12 -13).

Verbal explanations from students or siblings will not be accepted.

The school will seek a written explanation for any absence. This is necessary for school records no matter what the reason for, or duration of, the absence. See above for details of to whom emails should be addressed. Admin will electronically record the reason for each absence on the online register.

5. Arrangements for students to catch up on work missed during absence

Primary

As the majority of learning in Primary requires initial teacher input and discussion it is not always appropriate for children to be expected to 'catch up'. Where it is required and possible, class teachers will send work home with the child.

Secondary and A Level

It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with work done in class and gain details of homework set in their absence via the Google Classroom platform. Work will not be sent home.

The school will support the student when they return to help them in catching up with work they may have missed. It is the responsibility of the student to seek out the teacher to obtain any relevant worksheets needed before the next lesson.

6. Individual Learning Agreements

This is arranged according to the needs of the student. All information is agreed upon with the Head of Section, Principal and parents.

7. Truancy

The school will take disciplinary action against any students who are found to have been truanting. The parents/carers will be contacted and invited in to school to discuss possible reasons and to contribute to any support system implemented.

8. Notes

For the academic Year 2020-2021 the relevant contacts are:

Principal: Mr Mark McCullough: <mailto:principal@britishschoolgeneva.ch>

Deputy Principal / Head of KS4 / Head of Sixth form: Mrs Sabine Hutcheson: <mailto:sabine.hutcheson@britishschoolgeneva.ch>

Head of KS3: Mr Stuart Hudson: <mailto:stuart.hudson@britishschoolgeneva.ch>

Head of Primary: Mrs Jacqueline Smith: <mailto:jacqueline.smith@britishschoolgeneva.ch>

9. Procedures for Missing Students

Absence during a School Trip or any other off-site activity

It is the responsibility of members of staff in charge of school trips, or any other off-site activity, to check that all students who left College, return to school. A name check prior to departure is essential. Where appropriate, regular checks should also be made during the trip.

This responsibility applies to academic trips, theatre and cinema visits, field trips, service visits, sports fixtures, adventurous activities, and any other off-site activity.

Students should be reminded to inform the teacher i/c of their school trip if they are being taken home by their parents and will not therefore require school transport for the return journey.

In the event of a student going missing during a school trip, or other-off site activity, the member of staff i/c the trip must:

- a) make inquiries of other students on the same school trip;
- b) if the missing student is likely to be in immediate danger, immediately take such action as is safely possible in the circumstances, to try to find them;
- c) contact the local police station and report the details;
- d) attempt to contact and inform the Principal or a member of the SLT;

Staff are recommended to carry a school mobile, and share the number with the students, in any cases where the trip or activity will involve remote supervision or higher levels of student autonomy and freedom of movement.

Unexpected Student's Absence during the school day - Recommended Action

If a student has been reported as missing from class, House Assembly or a School event, the teacher / Form Tutor should take the following action.

Ask peers if the student was present in the previous class

Send a trusted student to check the toilet

Contact Admin by email with subject "Urgent – absence and name of the student"

If Admin is unaware of a justified reason for absence (ie medical appointment), they will

- a) Check the Medical Centre
- b) Check the HoPC's office or HoS' offices
- c) Search the School grounds
- d) Ask a friend of the missing student to phone them on their mobile
- e) Telephone the parents to inform them and find out if the parents know the whereabouts of the student

If actions (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e) have not revealed the whereabouts of the missing pupil, then inform the Principal, Deputy Principle or a member of the SLT.

Contacting the police is essential if none of the above actions results in the pupil being located.

Similar procedures would apply if a student expected back at School had not appeared and there was no obvious explanation.